

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 25, 2003
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

Commissioners in Attendance: Lyn Krizanich, Acting Chair; Ray Connell, Matthew Kitchen, Jeanne Krikawa, Denise Lathrop, Joe Quintana, Mimi Sheridan, Paul Tomita.

Commissioners Absent: John Owen, Chair; George Blomberg, Vice Chair; Anjali Bhagat, Angela Brooks, Steve Sheehy, Tony To

Staff: Marty Curry, Executive Director

Guests: David Graves, Monorail Station Area Planning Team, Department of Planning and Development; John Taylor, Council Central Staff; Rachel Ben Schmucl, Seattle Monorail Project; Kenny Pittman, Office of Policy Management; Steve Wilhelm; Puget Sound Business Journal.

Call to Order

Acting Chair Lyn Krizanich called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Lyn Krizanich noted the minutes should state that she did not attend the September 11, 2003 meeting. Commissioner Paul Tomita noted that the minutes should read that the work plan will be updated periodically rather than monthly. Commissioner Tomita made a motion to approve the minutes with changes, Commissioner Jeanne Krikawa seconded and the Commission unanimously approved the minutes with fore mentioned changes.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

CHAIR'S REPORT

▪ **Time Logs**

Acting Chair Krizanich reminded Commissioners that time logs are in Commissioners folders and should be filled out and turned in at the end of the meeting or Commissioners can use an electronic version to send in by next week.

• **Updates**

Transportation Committee meeting

Acting Chair Krizanich reminder Commissioners about the Transportation Committee meeting today and encouraged Commissioners to stay for the first portion of the meeting for a briefing on the work SDOT and DCLU are doing to revise the

Transportation Element of the Comp Plan and the Transportation Strategic Plan – something the Commission has recommended and is advising them on.

Sept 29, Monorail DEIS Public Hearing

Acting Chair Krizanich thanked Commissioner Matthew Kitchen for volunteering to deliver the Commission's testimony at the public hearing and encouraged all Commissioners to attend at least part of this public hearing/open house at the Seattle Center Northwest Rooms from 1 – 3 and 5 – 9 p.m.

Northgate

Director Marty Curry updated the Commission regarding Council Northgate COW meetings and Councilmember Steinbrueck's request for input from the Planning and Design Commissions on the Northgate Design Guidelines before Council approves these.

ACTION: Ms. Curry will prepare a memo relating the informal review that two Commissioners provided to the draft Design Guidelines. The Planning Commission has been asked to have representatives attend and participate in one or more of the Council COW meetings to tentatively be scheduled for October 6th. Ms. Curry will be working with the Executive Committee and Northgate Subcommittee on this.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION: MONORAIL DEIS – COMMISSION COMMENTS

Acting Chair Krizanich gave kudos to the Commissioners' work on Monorail DEIS review stating that many Commissioners have put into the review of the DEIS. She stated that the goal of the session today is to get overall comments and approval of the draft letter. Commissioners were sent the letter on Monday, and asked to review it and send in or bring revisions. Ms. Curry began by giving an overview and then asked for comments. Acting Chair Krizanich reminded Commissioners that the Planning Commission also will send a letter to the City that highlights issues/comments on the DEIS that should be of particular concern to the City.

Ms. Curry provided a staff overview on the draft document and stated that Commission staff was impressed with the level of substantive review and comments they have received from Commissioners. She stated that she would like the Commission to provide a list of conclusions and actions, including recommendations for the FEIS at the end of the discussion to provide and outline for Matthew Kitchen's testimony. She noted that the Commission will need an action to approve the letter, as revised/amended through today's discussion. She also stated that the Commission should formulate and approve the testimony for the September 29

hearing. Finally, Ms. Curry noted that many have suggested in the work session that the Commission should also have an action approving the key points to go into the letter to the City.

Commissioner Kitchen asked where the City of Seattle is in preparing its DEIS comments. Ms. Curry stated that she will Commission comments with City staff with Chuck Kirchner who is coordinating the City's comments and will check to see where they are in compiling City comments. The City is planning to submit its comments by the deadline (October 14), so it may not be possible to see their work before the Commission submits its letter. However, she noted she would share any new information. Commissioner Sheridan highlighted the Mayors letter to SMP that stated his concern about the SMP's narrow interpretation of the Council resolution and reiterated the intent that SMP take responsibility for a broader scope of impacts.

Commissioner Lathrop stated that the Land Use Section does not address the City's existing plans and policies. She also noted under GMA requirements cities need to adopt policies for siting major essential public facilities. She noted she would check on the City of Seattle's policy on siting essential public facilities in order to determine if this should be considered as part of the policy context for the Monorail project. She noted that this would help to determine if mitigation is dealt with at the permitting phase or the design phase. Disclosing this information in the EIS will help to inform public.

Commissioners agreed that the FEIS will need to have much more detail. The level of project design and detail is much less developed than similar projects such as the Sound Transit project. Commissioner Lathrop stated that she was happy to see the Commissions recommendation to consider a Supplemental EIS, noting that the level of detail at this stage of the project has made it very challenging for SMP to give adequate level of detail to detail sufficient mitigation measures.

Commissioner Tomita asked if the Supplemental EIS would happen after the DBOM contract since they won't know the technology and thus cannot analyze impacts as fully. Commissioner Sheridan stated the SMP staff said they had tried to include those variables but that she was still concerned.

Commissioner Sheridan also noted that SMP was now considering a new station location at Broad street that was not included as part of the Draft EIS. This supports the idea of a supplemental EIS to address these concerns as well as the lack of detail due to level of project design. Commissioner Lathrop stated that doing the supplemental before the FEIS is preferred so that there is adequate opportunity for public comment. Commissioner Kitchen stated that the Council has agreed through resolution that the EIS will inform specific mitigation negotiation thus making the supplemental an important piece of the process.

Acting Chair Krizanich opened the discussion more widely by going around the table and asking each Commissioner to comment. She ask for comment on a) Commissioners overall view of the letter; b) specific revisions or concerns, key points Commissioners want to be made at the public hearing and to the City.

Commissioner Lathrop noted that the DEIS is a decision making document and that the lack of detail in the DEIS should be a major point of the comments as should be the call for supplemental environmental review. Commissioners Kitchen, Sheridan, Krizanich all concurred strongly that this point should be made in an overall statement and is included as one of the big themes of the testimony.

Commissioner Quintana as stated that in the Energy and Public Utilities sections he reviewed, the DEIS seemed disingenuous in stating impacts, that it ignored critical issues and gave very limited level of detail for an environmental review. Commissioner Kitchen said he believed it was not completely off base with what is typical of an EIS prepared by the project proponent. Commissioners Sheridan and Lathrop concurred that the level of detailed analysis was rather sparse in both analysis of impacts and mitigation. Commissioner Quintana stated his point was that the detail and analysis of impacts seems light and the mitigation was not focused on the key issues. He suggested that the Commission's review needs to clearly identify the deficiencies in both stating the impacts and where the document insufficiently outlines mitigation options.

Ms. Curry asked the Commissioners as they review the comments to think about whether the Commission wants to make some conclusions about the overall document. The question is whether this example is pervasive throughout the document or if the Commission sees this in only some sections of the document and not others. Commissioner Tomita stated he felt this EIS takes much less ownership than other EIS's about the fact that this project has adverse impacts and does not outline clear mitigation strategies. Commissioner Quintana asked whether the EIS tries to minimize its impacts across the board. Commissioner Kitchen stated he felt we should focus more on specifics and less on overall statements. Commissioner Krizanich stated in all the sections she read the DEIS consistently underestimates and understates significant impacts. Commissioner Lathrop stated this EIS felt more like a programmatic level, not a project level EIS especially on the disclosure issue.

Commissioner Quintana stated that the electric power section discusses impacts on regional power supply where there will be little impact, but do not address the Monorail's impact on local peak power demand. The EIS ignores the major issue – that the system will uses electrical power during peak times (when demand is the highest and the cost is highest). This will impact rates for businesses and residents in Seattle and this is not adequately analyzed. The comparison to a steel mill is not a good comparison because the Monorail's power use will not have the same shape as a steel mill which can tailor its use to low demand times. Commissioner Tomita asked about the DEIS and how it addressed power substation distribution. Commissioner Quintana stated they did not address the issue in the energy

section of the DEIS. Commissioner Quintana proposed that the FEIS should include an analysis of rate impacts on City Light.

Commissioner Sheridan stated that the Parks section went into very little detail about the impacts to Longfellow creek and having a station so close in proximity. She stated it did not address the likely increase in vehicle traffic near the station and the impact to Stadium Park.

Commissioner Krikawa proposed to add a recommendation that the SPC comment letter should pull out key points at the beginning or end to make it more user-friendly. She is concerned that the document is very long and that the public, decision makers and SMP should be able to use the Commission document easily. Commissioner Krikawa proposed adding to the Overall Comments section the following statement, "The Planning Commissions recognizes that not all mitigation can be fully developed at this time. However, SMP should make every attempt to identify those areas where mitigation is necessary and how it will be addressed in the future through a defined process, agreements with partnering agencies through MOA / MOU, etc.

Commissioner Kitchen also pointed out that the City of Seattle has made a major policy statement to define two major contact points where mitigation will have to be negotiated; the FEIS and the permitting process.

Commissioner Krizanich pointed out that the DEIS focuses on residential and office impacts, that there are gaps. The DEIS, for example does not address the potential loss of parking revenue resulting from the building of columns. She stated the DEIS does not address the potential impacts of the SMP construction period with other construction projects and the planned moving of buses out of the downtown tunnel. She also noted that public safety both in design and operational features need to be addressed. It is merely alluded to but it should be addressed for stations and guideways. The Economics section does not address issues such as impacts to office rents, lease rates, occupancy rates and especially those spaces adjacent to monorail guideway. Air quality issues also exist for both residential and business buildings adjacent to the guideway. Commissioner Krizanich also noted her concern about financial problems if there is a shortfall and compromises are made regarding fewer stations – what would this do to impacts for parking, etc.? Finally, she expressed concern about plans for future stations, especially regarding impacts where Green Line stations would be potential connector lines thus creating greater impacts.

Commissioner Lathrop proposed that the FEIS should analyze how the Monorail fits within the City's overall transportation plan. She also stated the need for more analysis of medians and removing left turns along the route and how that impacts both access businesses and traffic circulation in adjacent neighborhoods.

Commissioner Kitchen noted that economic impacts outlined in DEIS do not look at cost benefit analysis and the impacts they do analyze are misplaced in the Economic section.

Key points for the testimony: A significant issue related to the lack of detail with the project as it stands now which may require supplemental analysis after the DBOM contract that would provide more specific mitigation measures. A major issue is the treatment of the underlying project risk with reallocating bus service which SMP has no authority over and effects of this on the viability of the system. There need to be clearly defined thresholds for impacts to set clear standards for when mitigation can be expected to kick in and what level of mitigation could be expected. The DEIS consistently underestimates detail and minimizes impacts. Additionally the Commission should highlight examples under topical/section areas such as visual, energy, etc. to make specific points.

ACTION: Commission staff will prepare hearing testimony based on the aforementioned comments and include additional comments. These will be sent to Commissioners for final review 9/26/03. Staff will formulate SPC formal comments pulling out SPC recommendations for the FEIS and will circulate letter or final review by Commissioners by October 3 or October 6. SPC will submit formal comments early in the week of October 6. SPC will send additional comments to the Mayor and City Council based on our DEIS review.

COMP PLAN UPDATE

Acting Chair Krizanich welcomed Tom Hauger, Comp Plan Manager and stated that Mr. Hauger was invited to give the Commission an update on plans for the October 14 Comp Plan Update Kick-off meeting. He will also describe the next steps in the Comp Plan Update and discuss the Planning Commission's role.

Mr. Hauger stated that the Comprehensive Plan Update is scheduled for October 14th 7-9 pm at Garfield Community Center. He is pleased that the Planning Commission is partnering with DCLU in sponsoring this Open House and Kick-Off event. As per the Commission's suggestion Seattle Times reporter William Dietrich has been invited to keynote the session and offer his insights on regional growth issues. Mr. Hauger also stated that the DCLU has the services of Irene Stewart to help with outreach for the forum and for the broader Comp Plan Update public involvement process.

Marty Curry stated that Angela Brooks has agreed to be the Planning Commission MC for the event. Ms. Curry asked for Commission input on topical areas and questions for Mr. Dietrich's keynote. Commissioner Krizanich suggested that John Rahaim have a role in the meeting, discussing the City's new vision for Planning and possibly speaking Mr. Dietrich's criticisms (in his series on Growth Management) of the City of Seattle's history of weak planning. Commissioner Krikawa reminded Mr. Hauger that the SPC had previously recommended putting together a user friendly guide to Comp Plan amendments and asked that would be available at this meeting. Mr. Hauger outlined some of the new and additional steps they were taking to educate and provide outreach to the broader community.

Action: Commission commits to providing input and comments for the kick off event including providing input on keynote speech and Q&A session, having a Planning Commissioner act as moderator and helping to staff displays at open house. Commission formalized agreement to advise staff; participate in planning and executing public process throughout the Comprehensive Plan update.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was no public comment.

ADJOURN MEETING

Acting Chair Krizanich adjourned the meeting at 9:00 a.m.